

Ralph Chew

Tape 042

This is a tape of the Uintah County Historical Society Echo Park History trip on this 21st day of July 1979. This is Mike Brown of the Golden Age Center. One of the principal speakers and guide for the trip today will be Mr. Ralph Chew.

Ralph Chew (Ralph), speaking: Right down there. Right down in there in the bottom of that canyon I was out [looking for] some cows and calves and I couldn't find them. I hunted that, and I run right up there on top of the mountain and I hunted right down in there. One day I come along there and I seen a fence across that canyon right there and I couldn't imagine what a fence would be there for, so I just pulled the fence down and it was made out of cedars and rocks, dead cedars and trees. I pulled it out and went up in there and two of my cows and calves was right up in there. They were fenced in good and solid.

Mike Brown (MB): Who fenced them?

Unintelligible comment from unidentified woman.

Ralph: I don't have any idea! I took them out of there and I never did know who put them in.

MB: Maybe it was one of the Park Rangers?

Ralph: It was before the Park's time.

MB: Oh, all right.

Lady: Do park rangers do things like that, Mike?

MB: Oh, I should hope not. Were there ever any families or ranches down in here?

Ralph: What?

MB: Any families or ranches down in here?

Ralph: The K Ranch is right down there. Right down there, see, right where those two places come together, the K Ranch is right there. It was established in, oh, in about 18, oh, I imagine about 1870, 1860 or 1870. It belonged to Tom Morgan for a long, long time.

MB: Did you know him?

Ralph: Yeah, we had a bet. Yeah, I came along there one time a-going down that road down, that Highway 40, and Highway 40 went down right past the place and right down the other way and it wasn't a-going where it is now. It went down right past the K Ranch right past the house door. I had a bunch of bucks I was bringing down there for Ralph Pitchford. I was going to take them to Jensen to feed them. Old Tom came out and met me a little ways and he said keep those dirty stinkers on the road and make 'em get. Keep 'em on the road and make 'em get.

Denver Long: You know that old Skull Creek that use to be there, Ralph?

Ralph: Yeah, Redwash Jones?

Denver: Yeah.

Ralph: Yeah, I knew him.

Denver: Yeah, they had my brother up for killing him when he died over there.

Ralph: Did they?

Denver: Yeah.

Ralph: I didn't know that.

Denver: Yeah, he and my brother got in a row and he took an ax to him, so he ran in and grabbed a .38 pistol and marched him up the ditch to where Old Morgan was and he fell over dead.

MB: Denver Long, I just was identifying your voice.

Denver: Oh. Old Lafe Richardson threwed him in that night until they got Old Jones down to have a post mortem on him. He thought he'd killed him. But my brother said he just got so dang mad he'd just yank his hair out of his head going up that ditch. ? Do you remember that?

Ralph: No, I don't remember that. ...? I heard you know quite a lot of gossip about ()

[Women talking in background.]

Denver: My brother use to work for Old Morgan a lot there.

Ralph: What was his name?

Denver: Jim.

Ralph: James.

[Unintelligible comments on tape at this point. There is a farewell and several men talking, before Ralph begins again.]

Ralph: See them white hills over there? See about a quarter of a mile up over them white hills right there? There were signs up a long time.

?: Have you been there on that spot?

Ralph: Yeah. There was dead sheep all over the place there.

MB: Ralph, this is called Buckwater right? After you get over on trail creek.

Ralph: Table.

MB: Yeah, Buckwater.

Ralph: Yeah.

[More unintelligible comments.]

?: A lot of times across that country.

MB: Is this where Bill Mann was a tied up that time?

Ralph: Yeah. They said he was right there. I didn't remember him being there but he said was right there.

Lady: Yeah, he was telling us that story, you know, at one of our history classes.

MB: I was under the impression that where Bill Mann was, where he was tied up and the sheep were killed, was a different location than...

Lady: Than this.

MB: Yeah, than where Darnell was.

Lady: Oh.

?: He wasn't there the night Darnell was killed. I think his father-in-law was, wasn't he?

Lady: I thought it was the same area, but I may be wrong.

Ralph: I think Bill was telling me that he was with Darnell. He got away.

Lady: Yeah, that's what I understood.

?: When the cowboy showed up.

Ralph: Yeah, when the cowboy showed up and shot a few shots.

Lady: He made the...

Ralph: Bill. Bill made the tracks and got away.

?: Who'd they ever figure shot Darnell anyway?

?: Nobody. They didn't never find out who shot Darnell.

Lady: Darnell or Yarnell.

?: I heard once that, a man told me, after the trial was over, twenty to thirty years after the trial was over, that Lou Wyman was captain of that outfit and all the men come up there all from up in above Craig and Hayden up in there. There wasn't a man down here and they tried, two or three of them, tried to convict them locals, but they couldn't prove nothing on them. Actually, they had alibis that they wasn't there.

?: Was Karren one of them?

MB: Was he one that was accused?

Ralph: Well, yeah, and Shorty Chambers, and I don't know several more than that, but they all had alibis, they all had places to go. The government monkeyed with it for three or four years trying to find somebody, but they never convicted nobody. They were quite certain that the perpetrators all came from up the country and that developed pretty fierce the antagonism.

?: Lou Wyman told me that every one of them was from up there. There wasn't a one of them from up here. They was all from up there. And he was captain of the bunch. If he was alive, I wouldn't have told you who he was. He told me that.

?: Oh.

?: Well, that's interesting to know. It doesn't mean anything to me except it gives a fairly better idea of what actually happened. Somebody told me it's no worse than ?. Not even Lou's or anybody else, I think. It's what he told me and with what I knew about it, it's pretty close to the facts.

?: I think we better get a-going or were gonna be a ...

?: Come on out here and I can show you two or three more overlooks out there where we're gonna go before we get there.

?: Now that's the road that you used to...

Ralph: We'll be coming down

Lady: There's the road. There's the road.

MB: Did you help build that road, Ralph?

Ralph: Yep. I helped dig it with an old team martin ? and an old rotten plow.

MB: Did you ever use what they call a Johnson scraper on something like that? You ever use a Johnson scraper?

Ralph: No, You don't mean a ...

MB: Yeah, yeah.

Ralph: We had two of them on there ? what was on them. ? Dirt and poles and leveling 'em up. There's a lookout. There's a lookout right behind this rock here, this high, this long ridge coming up there. There's a lookout right there and there's another one down on the ridge down there that we'll get to.

Lady: Isn't it beautiful?

Ralph: We'll be able to get to it without going clear into the corner, clear down there in the lower end.

MB: Is this Pole Creek Canyon?

Ralph: This is Pole Creek Canyon right there.

Lady: I think one of the those pictures that I showed that night was taken from this point looking back up.

Ralph: That ridge.

Lady: There was one of the road.

Ralph: Could have been.

Lady: Coming down through this way.

Ralph: Uh huh. I know this cape was in some of them you showed the other night.

Lady: Yeah, there was several of it.

MB: Now is that the Weber over there? Which formation is the white?

Ralph: That could be the Weber, but I don't think it is. It's a broken-up path. There's another one down there another little bit. That little piece right there doesn't connect right to nothing. It's probably the Weber, but I doubt it, I doubt if it's the Weber and I doubt if the other one down there is the Weber.

Lady: No, which ...

Ralph: I think it's something that slid in.

Lady: You mean you don't know?

Ralph: Slid. There might be the Weber formation, but it's not joined on to it.

Lady: This red?

Ralph: This red, yeah.

Lady: No, I don't believe that's Weber.

Ralph: I don't believe it is.

Lady: That picture of Geddy standing looking down a box canyon was right down here at the head of this little box canyon that come up. You go out around it, you know, and you can see the ledges.

MB: Right over this edge here.

Lady: Oh, this box canyon coming up here.

Ralph: Yeah, that's Boot Creek right there.

Lady: Yeah.

Ralph: Yeah, that's Boot Creek.

Lady: Yeah, well, where you come right up the hedge, you know, it boxes off right there under the road. That's where it was that he was standing looking over.

Ralph: Yeah, yeah! Well...

[Everyone talking at once.]

Lady: Iron Springs Bench.

MB: Iron Springs Bench.

Ralph: I thought that was the other side of the canyon, Iron Springs Bench.

Man: No, both sides.

Ralph: Oh, both sides. Pole Park is right over here on the other side of this next canyon.

[A lot of noise Sounds like their dropping the microphone.]

Ralph: Quite a bit of farming down in there.

[Unintelligible comments.]

Lady: Seventy-something, seventy-six.

Ralph: Seventy-six. Oh, I could've never done that.

Man: Was Pat around in here?

Ralph: Yeah, Old Pat would make a fire right here and the cave wind would blow the smoke right out and he'd cook here in the summertime when it was hot. He had ? all along in here and you could see them, but he stuck in here. But all the outfit he had didn't take him very long to gather his camp up and move.

Man: Did he have other caves in this immediate area?

Ralph: Yeah. There's one right down here, just around the curve. This is where he came off the ledge down here, just on this ledge, and met Dad. [He] said, "Mr. Chew, did you see Moran?" And Dad says, "No, I bought Moran out and he's left the country, went off and left the country." He said, "The son of a bitch is hiding in the bushes, he's trying to kill me."

End